

Message Text

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CONFIDENTIAL TOKYO 17178

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O.11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, JA

SUBJECT: FORUM FOR A NEW FREE SOCIETY

REF: STATE 261006

SUMMARY. CONCEIVED BY THREE YOUNGER LDP POLITICIANS, FORUM CONSISTS OF SOME SIXTY PROMINENT YOUNGER POLITICIANS, BUSINESSMEN AND INTELLECTURLAS, WHO MEET MONTHLY TO DISCUSS CURRENT ISSUES. FORUM IS WIDELY VIEWED BY MEDIA AS VEHICLE TO PROMOTE MIYAZAWA FOR PRIMIN. END SUMMARY.

1. JAPAN FORUM FOR A NEW FREE SOCIETY, CHAIRED BY SONY CHAIRMAN AKIO MORITA, IS COMPOSED OF SOME SIXTY PROMINENT YOUNGER POLITICIANS, BUSINESSMEN AND INTELLECTUALS. MEMBERS, MOSTLY IN THEIR FORTIES AND FIFTIES, MEET MONTHLY TO DISCUSS CURRENT DOMESTIC AND INTERNATIONAL POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC ISSUES. ANNOUNCED PURPOSE OF GROUP IS TO BRING MEMBERS' "WISDOM AND YOUTHFUL CREATIVITY" TO BEAR OF PRESENT CHALLENGES TO JAPAN.

2. FORUM, ORGANIZED BY THREE MIDDLE-LEVEL CONSERVATIVE CONFIDENTIAL

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POLITICIANS (SHINTARO ABE, NOBORU TAKESHITA, AND ICHIRO NAKAGAWA), NUMBERS AMONG ITS MEMBERS VIRTUALLY ALL LIKELY PRIME MINISTERIAL CANDIDATES UNDER SIXTY AND REPRESENTATIVE SPRINKLING OF JUNIOR BUSINESS AND INTELLECTUAL ESTABLISHMENT. MEMBERS SHARE A GNAWING DISSATISFACTION AT BEING SHUT OUT OF TOP JAPANESE LEADERSHIP POSITIONS BECAUSE OF THEIR RELATIVE YOUTH.

BUSINESSMEN, IN ADDITION, TEND TO BE YOUNGER SCIONS OF WEALTHY FAMILIES RATHER THAN REPRESENTATIVES OF GIANT JAPANESE CONGLOMERATES WHICH TRADITIONALLY PROVIDE TOP BUSINESS LEADERSHIP. PRESUMABLY, POLITICNA SEE IN THEIR BUSINESS COLLEAGUES LIKELY SOURCES OF ESSENTIAL POLITICAL FUNDS. BUSINESSMEN, BY ALIGNING THEMSELVES WITH VIRTUALLY ALL SIGNIFICANT PRIME MINISTERIAL CONTENDERS, APPEAR ASSURED OF SUBSTANTIAL ECONOMIC, AS WELL AS POLITICAL, POWER WHEN POLITICIANS TAKE OVER TOP LEADERSHIP. (BRIEF STATEMENT OF FORUM'S OBJECTIVES AND MEMBERSHIP LIST BEING POUCHED.)

3. ANNOUNCEMENT OF FORUM' ESTABLISHMENT WAS MADE WITH CONSIDERABLE MEDIA SPLAST BEFORE ALL JULY UPPER HOUSE BALLOTS WERE FINALLY COUNTED. IF, AS EXPECTED, LDP HAD LOSTS ITS MAJORITY, FORUM MIGHT WELL HAVE CALLED FOR NEW POLITICAL LEADERSHIP. IN THAT SENSE, FORUM WAS--AND IS -- VIEWED AS POTENTIAL CHALLENGE TO FUKUDA-OHIRA LDP LEADERSHIP IN GENERAL, AND OHIRA SUCCESSION IN PARTICULAR. IN SUBSEQUENT WEEKS, FORUM CAME TO BE REGARDED BY MEDIA INCREASINGLY AS VEHICLE FOR TO PROMOTE MIYAZAWA CANDIDACY FOR PRIME MINISTERSHIP. OF ALL STUDY GROUPS WHICH HAVE MUSHROOMED RECENTLY, FORUM IS ONE BEING WATCHED MOST CLOSELY AS POTENT ALIGNMENT OF PROSPECTIVE POLITICAL LEADERS AND BUSINESS MONEY.

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